educational institutions including medical and professional for the OBCs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A proposal for providing 27% reservation to OBCs in the Educational Institutions including medical and professional institutions is under consideration of the Government.

(c) Question does not arise.

Workshop on 'Child Abuse'

1295. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Workshop on "Child Abuse—a growing menace" was organised by the Indian Medical Association in New Delhi, on April 14, 1998;

(b) if so, the main observations and suggestions made at the workshop; and

(c) what further steps have been and are being taken to curb the menace, including prostitution of girl child and their sexual abuse?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) the information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Artificial Limbs by NGOs

1296. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether providing artificial limbs to the handicapped has become a big business for voluntary organisations and a substantial portion of Rs. 130 crores disbursed as aid to such NGOs by his Ministry is used by them either to pay salaries or increase capital assets, though many of NGOs are profit earning;

(b) if so, the reasons for the failure of Government agencies or officials to detect such irregularities; and

(c) the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) The Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances is aimed to assist needy physically handicapped persons in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical social and psychological rehabilitation. Money under the Scheme is released to implementing agencies who fulfill the requirements of the scheme, including the requisite recommendation of the concerned State Govts., for the purposes approved under the scheme.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Promotion of Girls' Education in Scheduled Areas

1297. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be please to state:

(a) whether Government have launched any special scheme for the promotion of girls' education in the country particularly in the scheduled areas;

(b) if so, since when and the details of such special programmes;

(c) whether residential schools have been set up and drop out rate has been checked with the implementation of such schemes; and

(d) if so, to what extent since the inception of such special schemes or programmes?